

August Mixed Waste Subgroup Highlights

The Hanford mixed waste (MW) subgroup met on August 14, 1997. Larbi Bounini (WMH) was introduced as a new member of the MW subgroup. Norm Olson stated that he has sent out to all subgroup members five technology demonstration and eight technology deployment fact sheets for review. Five of these fact sheets pertain to spent fuel but they need STCG subgroup review so they were included in the MW package. These fact sheets are also being reviewed by the appropriate vendors, project managers, DOE, etc. at the same time. These fact sheets can be changed right up to September 30 but he wants comments sent from the subgroup members by August 29 to Steve Weakley. Bill Bonner commented that FDH should coordinate these fact sheets with the technologies listed in the STCG linkage tables. Norm Olson also praised Walt Josephson for the presentation he gave on Hanford MW technology needs at the TRICIPE conference.

Bill Bonner stated that PNNL is developing a proposal to be sent to the MWFA for funding that is a novel strategy for TRU waste assay in high radiation fields. This technique would help meet two of the high needs on the Hanford MW technology needs list from last year. One application would be for the long-length equipment from the tanks as well as other "hot" wastes of various sizes and configurations. Tony Peurrung (PNNL) presented viewgraphs detailing the proposal. The proposed solution is to move the measurement equipment 3 to 10 meters away from the "hot" object. The current equipment does not work in the high radiation fields. This proposed solution was developed by the National Security Division at PNNL for DOE to aid in the detection of illegal shipments of nuclear material. The directional neutron detector uses a honeycomb box structure to measure slow neutrons coming from one direction. The neutron reflector slows neutrons down and reflects them in one direction for measurement by the detector. This approach increases the signal to background ratio to allow the detector to be placed further away from the "hot" object being measured. The equipment can be adapted to handle varying shapes and sizes of equipment including the long-length equipment from the tanks that will be pulled out at a rate of 1 ft/min. By separating the TRU from the non-TRU waste there will be large savings in disposal costs and risk reduction from being further removed from the "hot" objects. The goal in FY98 would be to complete a lab demonstration and then later to do a field demo on long-length tank equipment. They are looking for STCG support before sending the proposal to the MWFA. The current deadline is to present the proposal to the STCG management council for endorsement at the September 17 meeting. The subgroup will receive a copy of the full proposal for review by the end of August. Please send all comments to Bill Bonner or Steve Weakley.

Norm Olson gave an update on the MW technology needs collection process for this year. The Technology Steering Groups have all met and he is talking to 10 project managers to get more data. The STCG management council needs to see the needs package on September 17 and vote on them at the October meeting. The Subgroup agreed to meet on August 28 to begin our review of the needs package.

Roger Pressentin has not heard from the MWFA on a response to our concerns about their treatment of our needs. He is going to draft a letter in response from the STCG to the MWFA stating our concerns. This will come from Lloyd Piper and be sent to Bill Owca, as head of the MWFA. This letter needs to be endorsed both by the Subgroup as well as the management council

Moses Jaraysi gave an update on the Technology Certification Program. The Washington State legislature passed a bill this spring authorizing the Department of Ecology to put together a certification program for environmental cleanup technologies. California has such a program in place already.

Ecology will only establish the program if the Federal government provides funding for it. Moses said he would check on the status of the program and report back to us. The intent of the program is to streamline the permitting process from state to state.

Bill Bonner provided an update on the status of two PNNL proposals that were sent to the MWFA recently. The first dealt with the retrieval of RH waste. The MWFA is not sure what they are going to do about RH waste and they are planning to publish a report in January addressing the RH waste issue. Their focus now is not on RH waste. The second proposal, dealing with a recyclable system to clean Na, will not be funded by the MWFA. We may want to look at waste minimization funding for this proposal but there may still be too much development work to be done to qualify for waste minimization or pollution prevention funding. These sources are usually for deployment of proven technologies.